

SHARP Monthly Reader

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Acosta Pledges Balanced OSHA

Labor Secretary Alex Acosta is promising that OSHA will balance enforcement with an increased focus on compliance assistance, pushing back on House Democrats' assertions that drastic cuts to the Labor Department (DOL) would harm worker safety, but he again sidestepped a request to commit to enforcing the Obama OSHA's silica rule.

During a House Appropriations subcommittee hearing on President Donald Trump's fiscal year 2018 budget request, Acosta argued that the Trump administration plans to prioritize enforcement of workplace safety and other labor laws. The administration's FY18 budget request includes major cuts to DOL, but a slight decrease for OSHA from FY17.

"A good job and a safe job shouldn't be mutually exclusive," Acosta said. The administration "is fully committed to enforcing worker protection laws."

He backed an approach that balances enforcement with compliance assistance, targets the worst offenders for "high-impact" penalties with a deterrent effect, while not allowing smaller companies to get a pass on workplace safety violations.

His pledge to focus on workplace safety came as several committee Republicans backed long-standing industry arguments that the Obama OSHA's

enforcement approach was adversarial and prioritized public shaming over compliance assistance.

Subcommittee Chairman Tom Cole (R-OK), for example, argued the Obama administration inappropriately prioritized punitive enforcement efforts over worker safety. "I would suggest that the culture at some of these agencies needs to change," he said. "Inspectors and safety experts must view their roles as cooperative partners of employers and employees to advance worker safety across the Nation's industries."

But Democrats, including Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), questioned how the administration could claim to support worker safety while drastically cutting various DOL training programs, including OSHA's Susan Harwood training grants, which she argued are necessary to train workers in high hazard industries, especially given OSHA's

limited resources for inspections.

"You say you're going to do more with less," she said. "You can only do less with less." Industry officials have long expected that the Trump administration will shift back toward a George W. Bush-era approach that emphasizes compliance assistance over the Obama OSHA's emphasis on enforcement, which industry attorneys have argued focused on adding new regulations and shaming employers into compliance.

Labor advocates and Senate Democrats have argued that the administration's early efforts to repeal and delay OSHA rules show Trump reneging on campaign pledges to help the working class, and have sought assurances from Acosta that he will enforce Obama era rules bolstering limits for worker exposure to silica and beryllium.



Safety Video Library

40 Year History OSHA

Step Ladders

Hearing Protection

Confined Space

BBP

The Violent Workplace

A couple weeks ago a nurse, aide and police chief were killed at an Ohio nursing home, along with the gunman, who died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. While it's impossible to prevent all tragic events, especially those involving an armed assailant entering the building despite an order of protection against him, there are ways to reduce the likelihood of workplace violence.

According to a 2014 [Scientific American](#) article,

"Health-care workers experience the most nonfatal workplace violence compared to other professions by a wide margin, with attacks on them accounting for almost 70 percent of all nonfatal workplace assaults causing days away from work in the U.S., according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics."

While the Scientific American article focused on nurses in a hospital setting, a [2016 study](#) of nursing staff in long-term

care facilities finds that "65% of the participants had experienced workplace violence while 41% believed that management shows little or no concern for their safety."

To begin addressing the problem, training and procedures within the organization should be reviewed. The Joint Commission offers a number of recommendations to prevent workplace violence, including the [following](#) (see [here](#) for more):

Prepare For Sizzling Temperatures

Cal/OSHA outdoor workplace Heat Illness Prevention regulations require employers to take four steps to prevent heat illness. We know here you are just argued to bring awareness to the situation to your employees. Taking these four steps will help our company avoid heat illness in your facility.

Four Steps:

Training – Train all employees and supervisors on heat illness prevention.

Water – Provide enough fresh water so that each worker can drink at least 1 quart per hour, and encourage workers to do so.

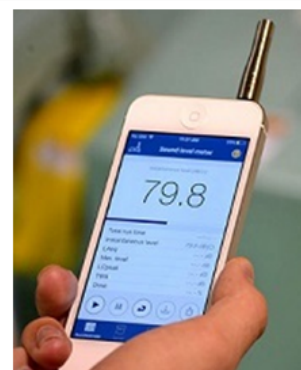
Shade – Provide shaded areas upon request or

when temperatures exceed 80 degree, and encourage any worker to take a cool-down rest in the shade for at least 5 minutes to protect against overheating. Workers should not wait until they feel sick to cool down.

Planning – Develop and implement effective written emergency response procedures

NIOSH releases sound app to help protect workers from hearing loss

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has developed a new, free mobile application for iOS devices that measures sound levels in workplaces. The NIOSH Sound Level Meter app displays real-time noise exposure data based on NIOSH and OSHA limits. The easy-to-use app can be particularly helpful to occupational safety and health trainers as they teach construction apprentices about noise hazards and the need for hearing protection. Visit the [app webpage](#) for more information.



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OSHA delays rule for employers to improve records

Safety has suffered a setback.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has announced its intention to delay a new record-keeping requirement.

A rule issued last year was to have forced employers to improve tracking of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Probably hoping no one would notice, OSHA

subtly buried an "Update" deep on its website this past Wednesday — announcing that it intends to propose a delay in requirements of its new record-keeping standard.

The target of this latest rollback is a rule issued last year to "Improve Tracking of Workplace Injuries and Illnesses," which simply requires employers already covered by OSHA's

requirements to send some of that information in to OSHA.

OSHA had planned to publicize the information on its website.

The rule also prohibits employers from retaliating against workers for reporting injuries or illnesses.

Source: nydailynews.com

Workplace Fails Videos

Forklift Fails

Ultimate Work/Job Fails

Democrats Call for Inspector General Review of OSHA Rule Delays

Democratic senators are calling for the Department of Labor's inspector general to launch an inquiry into recent DOL decisions to delay implementation of the silica and beryllium rules approved during the Obama administration, and to issue fewer press releases covering enforcement cases.

"We are deeply concerned by the delay of these

rules," the senators, all members of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, said in the May 18 letter to DOL Inspector General Scott Dahl.

The senators said the department didn't offer "substantive rationalization of the delays," raising questions about the reasons for the postponements and

whether the Trump administration's DOL leadership intends to fully implement the rules.

The drafting of both rules by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration included lengthy reviews of scientific evidence and public comment periods, the lawmakers said.

[Read More](#)

Feds warn Arizona about lowering workplace injury fines

Federal officials warned a commission overseeing Arizona's workplace safety agency that its practice of lowering fines on companies for worker injuries and deaths violates the state's laws and could jeopardize its ability to run its own safety program.

The letter from the Phoenix office director of the U.S.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration to the Industrial Commission of Arizona last week recommends the commission cease those actions immediately.

The commission oversees the Arizona Division of Occupational Safety and Health, which regulates

workplace safety under an approved federal plan.

The federal agency investigated after a December complaint from a workplace safety group known as the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health.

[Read More](#)

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"Safety is not an object nor
something you can measure! It's
culture, a value."



Information provided by
OSHA QuickTakes and
OSHA.gov

Meet Our Staff

This month's issue we would like to introduce two new KDOL-ISH employees, Paul Maness, 21(d) Safety consultant, and Shane Etzold, Public & State Safety consultant.

Paul Maness joined KDOL Feb of 2017. He previously worked as a corporate Safety and Environmental Director for 20 years for a primary metals private firm. Spent many years working in general industry, mostly tool and die machine shops. Paul also volunteered in his community as a firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician I/D for 22 years. He has trained many adult students for 14 years as an instructor at that level. Paul is basically an outdoors person, having a natural love to camp, hunt and fish and now he has the absolute pleasure of passing the love of the outdoors onto his grandchildren.



Shane's previous work experience includes 3 years with the Fire Marshal's Office (fire prevention inspector), 3 years with the Department of Transportation (safety specialist) and 4 years in private industry at a cabinet manufacturing company (safety/environmental coordinator). Shane graduated from Pittsburg State University with a Bachelor's in Technology Management and a MS in Human Resource Development.

Hobbies include the big 3 – family, firearms and bear wrestling (currently amateur status)

He is a purveyor of fine art and tapestries.



Upcoming Events

Plan to join us in 2017 for
the 68th Annual Safety
and Health Conference -
at the Capitol Plaza
Hotel, in Topeka, KS,
September 19 – 22,
2017.

Check out our website:
<http://www.dol.ks.gov/Safety/events.aspx>

Work Comp date: Sept
27 – 28. Info at:
<https://www.dol.ks.gov/WorkComp/seminar.aspx>